



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL OCEAN SERVICE
OFFICE OF OCEAN AND COASTAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

Governor Craig R. Benson
State of New Hampshire
Office of the Governor
107 North Main Street
State House - Room 208
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

APR - 3 2003

RECEIVED

APR 7 - 2003

OFFICE OF STATE PLANNING

Dear Governor Benson:

On March 7, 2003, the Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management (OCRM) received your request for approval of the New Hampshire inland coastal boundary as an amendment to New Hampshire's federally approved coastal zone management program. OCRM congratulates the New Hampshire Coastal Program (NHCP) on its completion of this challenging effort to expand the inland coastal boundary.

OCRM has reviewed your request and determined, as a preliminary matter, that the NHCP would remain approvable, pursuant to section 306(d) of the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA), if amended to include the expanded inland coastal boundary. In addition, OCRM has determined that its final approval of the expanded coastal boundary would be a substantial change to the NHCP and requires OCRM to determine, pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), if our approval would be a major federal action which may have a significant effect on the human environment. Therefore, OCRM will prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) in compliance with the NEPA requirements. Pursuant to section 306(e) of the CZMA, OCRM has determined it necessary to extend the review period for New Hampshire's request for a period of at least 120 days in order to complete the EA-. In the event additional time is necessary to meet NEPA requirements, OCRM may extend the review period further.

OCRM looks forward to continued cooperation and coordination with the NHCP in the development of the NEPA document. Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact Bill O'Beirne, Team Leader, at 301-713-3155 extension 160.

Sincerely,

John R. King, Acting Chief
Coastal Programs Division

cc: David Hartman, NHCP

